

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00  
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMENSASSY TEL AVIV  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 0443

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR EG, IS, IV  
SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM SADAT TO HOUPHOUET ON  
EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS

1. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR CHABANA DROPPED BY THIS MORNING  
TO INFORM ME THAT ON JANUARY 12, DURING COURSE OF  
GISCARD'S VISIT TO IVORY COAST, CHABANA HAD SEEN  
PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY TO DELIVER MESSAGE FROM  
SADAT SEEKING HOUPHOUET'S SUPPORT IN PRESSURING  
ISRAELIS TO SHOW MORE FLEXIBILITY ON PALESTINE QUESTION.  
CHABANA SAID THAT, AS WE KNEW, SADAT AND HOUPHOUET WERE  
IN REGULAR COMMUNICATION AND THEIR EXCHANGES WERE  
SOMETIMES ORAL THROUGH HOUPHOUET'S SPECIAL EMISSARY  
GHOULEM BERRAH AND SOMETIMES, AS IN PRESENT CASE,  
BY MEANS OF LETTERS.

2. ACCORDING TO EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR, SADAT'S MESSAGE  
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TO HOUPHOUET HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER LACK OF FLEXI-  
BILITY BEING SHOWN BY ISRAELIS ON PALESTINE QUESTION  
AND EMPHASIZED NEED TO CONVINCE ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGIN THAT  
NO LASTING SETTLEMENT OF MIDDLE EAST PROBLEMS WAS POSSIBLE  
UNLESS ISRAEL ACCEPTED RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO SELF-  
DETERMINATION. PROPO&ALS MADE BY ISRAELIR FOR LIMATED  
ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY ON WEST BANK FELL FAR SHORT OF

WHAT WAS NEEDED. EVEN MORE MODERATE OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING WEST BANK MAYORS WHO HAD COOPERATED WITH ISRAELIS IN PAST, REJECTED THESE PROPOSALS. BEGIN HAD TO BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND THAT NO RPT NO RESOLUTION OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN PROBLEMS WAS POSSIBLE WITHOUT ISRAELI CONCURRENCE IN THE RIGHT OF PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

3. SADAT HAD THEREFORE ASKED HOUPHOUET TO MAKE THIS POINT DIRECTLY TO ISRAELIS AS WELL AS TO SUPPORT EGYPTIAN POSITION WITH OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS WHO MIGHT THEMSELVES BE IN POSITION TO PUT PRESSURE ON ISRAELIS. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, CHABANA SAID THAT IT WOULD OF COURSE BE UP TO HOUPHOUET TO CHOOSE APPROPRIATE CHANNEL TO COMMUNICATE HIS VIEWS TO ISRAELIS, BUT THAT EGYPTIANS BELIEVED THAT INFLUENTIAL ISRAELI BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN ABIDJAN, RATHER THAN ISRAELI INTERESTS SECTION OF BELGIAN EMBASSY, PROBABLY CARRIED MOST WEIGHT IN JERUSALEM.

4. CHABANA CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE HAD BEEN DIS-APPOINTED TO NOTE THAT JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED JANUARY 15 ON CONCLUSION OF GISCARD VISIT (SEPTEL) HAD MADE ONLY PASSING REFERENCE TO MIDDLE EAST, EXPRESSING HOPE THAT SADAT'S INITIATIVE WOULD RESULT IN SETTLEMENT BASED ON ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967, RECOGNITION OF "LEGITIMATE RIGHTS" OF PALESTINIANS, AND THE RIGHT OF ALL STATES IN REGION, INCLUDING ISRAEL, TO LIVE IN PEACE  
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WITHIN FRONTIERS THAT WERE SECURE, RECOGNIZED AND GUARANTEED. CHABANA BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THAT HOUPHOUET WOULD DO HIS BEST TO SUPPORT SADAT. THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WAS CLOSE AND HOUPHOUET FULLY AGREED WITH EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON PALESTINE QUESTION.

5. COMMENT: AS HOUPHOUET HAS OFTEN MADE CLEAR IN HIS COMMENTS TO US ON MID-EAST SITUATION, HE STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT ISRAEL MUST SHOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND MUST, SOONER OR LATER, AGREE TO PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. HOUPHOUET'S PERSONAL PREFERENCE WOULD BE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN MINI-STATE, BUT HE WOULD CERTAINLY SUPPORT ANY FORM OF SETTLEMENT WHICH EGYPTIANS AND MODERATE PALESTINIANS BELIEVED WOULD BE WORKABLE.

6. THE DELIVERY OF SADAT'S LATEST MESSAGE TO HOUPHOUET AT TIME OF GISCARD VISIT WAS CERTAINLY NOT RPT NOT COINCIDENTAL AND IT IS PROBABLE THAT MESSAGE WAS DESIGNED TO INFLUENCE TONE AND CONTENT OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE AS MUCH AS TO SPUR HOUPHOUET TO RENEW DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY WITH ISRAELIS AND HIS FELLOW AFRICANS. WHILE MID-EAST PORTION OF COMMUNIQUE FALLS SHORT OF WHAT

EGYPTIANS MUST HAVE HOPED FOR, IT DOES PROVIDE BASIS FOR  
HOUPHOUET TO EXPRESS HIS VIEW IN GREATER DETAIL TO ISRAELIS  
BY MEANS OF DISCREET DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WHICH IVORIAN  
PRESIDENT PREFERS TO PUBLIC DECLARATIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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